

Psychological Warfare

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/32876524) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/32876524>.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Harry Potter - J. K. Rowling
Relationship:	Sirius Black/Severus Snape
Character:	Sirius Black , Severus Snape , Remus Lupin , James Potter , Peter Pettigrew , Regulus Black
Additional Tags:	Alternate Universe - Olympics , Alternate Universe - Modern Setting , Alternate Universe - Muggle , Alternate Universe - Swimming , Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics , Swim Team , Rivalry , Hate Sex , Marauders , Fist Fights , Chav vs Slav , Intimidation , Anal Sex , Smut , Hair-pulling , Explicit Sexual Content , Angry Sex , Top Severus Snape , Bottom Sirius Black
Stats:	Published: 2021-07-28 Completed: 2021-10-02 Chapters: 6/6 Words: 13210

Psychological Warfare

by [DivinityInMotion](#)

Summary

A forming rivalry between Great Britain's freestyler, Sirius Black, and the intimidating Slovenian swimmer Severus Snape comes to a head at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

Notes

Am I just using this fic as an excuse to write about swimming AND hate sex? You betcha! So let's be honest here, this is almost purely self indulgence.

The Olympics is the best thing that comes around every four years, but I guess it's only competing with leap years. For a long time now, I've been meaning to write a Snirius athlete rivalry fic, so here it finally is! I hope you enjoy!

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

100m Butterfly

Chapter Notes

Think of this as a prologue, we're just skimming the surface here

... "As we look forward to the second day of the swimming at the Tokyo 2020 games, we can't help but feel a little anxious about the upcoming events. This morning, James Potter represents Great Britain in the 100m Men's Butterfly Final. Potter scored a silver medal at the 2016 Rio Games in the same event, only 0.57 milliseconds behind Slovenia's Severus Snape. Potter set a new personal best back in 2019 at the FINA World Aquatics Championships, a time of 51.03 seconds, but only time will tell if it's enough to beat Slovenia's best swimmer.

"Tonight, Potter joins Remus Lupin, Peter Pettigrew, and Sirius Black in the Men's 4x100m Medley Relay heats. While the US is the team to beat - having won the race for the previous nine Games - the Australian team is also one to watch. While Great Britain's relay team isn't favoured to place, we'll be supporting our swimmers through the screen"...

If the article were in a physical newspaper, Sirius would have scrunched it up. Instead, he shut his phone off and huffed.

"Reading that tripe will do you no good, I can't believe I still have to tell you that," Remus chastised from the front seat. He didn't have to turn around to guess what Sirius moaning about.

Sirius snorted, "For a British tabloid, you think they'd be rooting for us, but they love to kiss the other swimmers' asses. They can't write a positive word about us without following it up with doubt."

"So stop reading that shit then, and don't you dare tell me what it said; I don't need the tabloids getting in my head too," Remus warned as he turned back around in the front seat of the Uber.

Sirius, Remus, and Peter were travelling to the Tokyo Aquatics Centre the savviest way they knew how. James' final was at 10:50 am; a few others from Great Britain's swim team had their finals this morning, but Sirius was mostly concerned about James.

He would never admit it out loud, but he thought that the article had it half right. James is the best Butterfliar Britain has to offer, no doubt, but up against Severus Snape? Sirius feared the race was already over.

Snape was a snake. Yes, he was one of the best swimmers the world had ever seen, and Sirius would respect him if that was all he was. But he had a way of getting in his opponents' heads before a race, pulling down their guards and throwing them off course.

This was Sirius' first Olympic Games, he had just missed out on qualifying for the Rio Games, but he'd competed on an international level for years and had encountered Snape more than once. He liked to think that he was above Snape's intimidation tactics, but it had worked more than he cared to admit.

The car pulled to a stop outside of the Aquatic Centre. Remus took care of the cost and they made

their way inside. The scent of chlorine wafted over Sirius immediately and he breathed deeply.

No, he would never tire of that smell. No matter what the sport threw at him, there was a reason he was pushing through it all.

“Quit smelling the place, you freak.” Sirius whipped around until he located the source of the voice. His brother, Regulus Black, was grinning at him from a few metres away. He stepped away from his own group of friends - most of the Athletics team - and sidled up to him. “Are you three going to sit with us today, or huddle by yourselves like you did last night?”

Remus looked back over his shoulder at the myriad of athletes. “We can join you, as long as you won’t distract us during James’ race,” Remus returned Regulus’ grin.

“Like we’d ever do that. We *are* here to support him, remember?” Regulus argued.

“Yeah, don’t try too hard to convince us of that,” Sirius said.

They merged with the other group of British athletes and entered the competition room. The stadium was no warmer during the day than it was at night, but it wasn’t warm enough for Sirius to shrug off his team jacket.

Sirius sat in between Remus and Peter, but sadly he wasn’t spared the experience of having his brother rest his shoes against the back of his head. If he had to slouch over for the whole meet just to avoid getting dirt in his hair, he would hardly be able to move his back for the relay that night, but that seemed so far away.

“James Potter, Great Britain, Lane 5,” the announcer’s voice echoed throughout the stadium. He emerged from behind the sign that flashed Great Britain’s flag. His curly hair was bound and contained underneath his two caps, and he had already pulled his goggles down tight over his eyes. He raised a single arm and waved in one large, continuous motion. He knew he couldn’t see them at the moment, but Sirius whistled and waved back as the applause echoed around the arena.

“Severus Snape, Slovenia, Lane 4.” The stony-faced Slovenian emerged onto the pool deck. He too was met with applause and offered a small wave to the crowd.

Sirius squinted his eyes and leaned forward, balancing his elbows on his knees. As they all prepared for the race, shedding their jackets and making adjustments to the diving blocks, Sirius caught James turning his head to look at Snape.

“Bastard, did you see that?” Remus snapped. It didn’t escape Remus’ notice either.

“Of course I did, what do you think he said to him?” Sirius asked.

“Nothing good.”

The swimmers stood up next to their diving blocks and the marshall blew the first whistle. Even though Sirius wasn’t racing, the sound alone rose goosebumps along his arms. While he didn’t have the chance to respond to that whistle in his first heat tonight, he would have that privilege tomorrow night for his first individual event. Sirius looked at the other swimmers; an Australian, a Japanese, two Americans, an Austrian, and an Albanian.

Sirius watched as James gripped the front of the diving block, body pulled tautly.

A slightly muffled voice called, “Take your marks”, then the starting buzzer sounded and the

competitors were off. Sirius started whooping along with the rest of his team. Next to him, Peter was shouting at the top of his lungs.

“Hurry up, James, you great bastard!” His hands were cupped around his mouth as if that was ever going to help James hear him. Sirius knew better than anyone that having two water-logged ears covered with two constricting caps rendered you nearly deaf.

The race was intensely close, not a single competitor had fallen to the back of the race through the first leg. After the flip at the other end, the standings started to make themselves clear. Snape and James pulled ahead, followed by the Albanian with the Australian close behind. Sirius joined in with Peter’s shouting. He rose to his feet as they reached the final 25m stretch.

Snape pulled ahead, just. He touched the wall. James was there a split second after. Sirius clapped as he whipped around to look at the electronic scoreboard.

1. SLO - Severus SNAPE - 50.03

2. GBR - James POTTER - 50.15

He looked away, he didn’t care about the rest. James smiled and ripped his top cap off and pulled his goggles up. Next to him, Snape slammed a fist down on the water, grinning. He pulled off his own cap, raised his goggles, and slapped the water again. He waved to whom Sirius assumed were the rest of the Slovenian Olympic Team in the stands.

“That’s a personal best, that’s what matters,” Remus said over the clapping.

Sirius nodded, but he bit his tongue. He kept his eyes on Snape and the small tendril of black hair escaping from the back of his second cap. Sirius watched as Snape looked past James and ignored his gesture of sportsmanship, leaving James hanging on the lane rope with his hand in the air. He fought the urge to grind his teeth.

The athletes retreated from the pool and James spotted them in the stands. He waved at them with his chest heaving before he was pulled away by a BBC reporter.

Sirius felt someone else looking at them. He turned his gaze to the gold medallist, only to find him already staring up at the British athletes.

It really wasn’t fair to Slovenia that their best athlete was a prick.

4 x 100m Medley Relay

Chapter Notes

I forgot to mention, but what I decide to keep accurate to the actual Tokyo games, events, and results is entirely arbitrary, I'm making up the rules as I go.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

...“BBC caught this photo of James Potter with his new silver medal yesterday morning. He set a new personal best with a time of 50.15 seconds and is quite ecstatic about that fact if his grin is anything to go off. He beat Albania’s Quirinius Quirrell to the silver position by 0.28 seconds, who joined Slovenia’s Severus Snape and James Potter on the podium as the bronze medallist. (See picture below)”...

Sirius pointedly did not look at the picture below, but he saved the other picture of James’ blinding grin and sent it off to his friend. He followed it up with a quick text:

‘The face of a champ’

James’ phone dinged and he looked down to see who sent him a text. Upon realising it was Sirius, he turned to face him and raised an eyebrow.

“I’m right here, why didn’t you just show it to me yourself?” James asked.

“Just have a look,” Sirius nudged him with an elbow.

James unlocked his phone and laughed at the photo of himself. “They couldn’t have waited until I wasn’t blinking?”

Remus looked over James’ shoulder at the phone. “If it’s any help, it looks like you’re closing your eyes in excitement?”

““Closing my eyes in excitement’?” James scoffed.

“Yeah, I’m sure it’s a thing,” Remus scratched the nape of his neck, he sounded less sure of himself now. Remus sat back down on his rickety, plastic chair and looked around the marshalling room.

Sirius continued reading the article.

“Great Britain’s Men’s Medley Relay team had the fourth quickest qualifying time in last night’s heats, behind the US, Australia, and Japan. Joining them in the finals is Slovenia, the ROC, Sweden, and New Zealand.

“Swimming the backstroke leg later this morning is Remus Lupin, who will make his individual Olympic debut tonight in the Men’s 100m Backstroke. Peter Pettigrew also appears in today’s final, swimming the breaststroke leg in place of Frank Longbottom, who swam in last night’s heats. Following him is James Potter in his second last event at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. He will also swim in Great Britain’s Freestyle Relay team, which is scheduled for tomorrow night. Sirius Black will swim the final leg of the race, freestyle, and is set to appear in the 200m freestyle heats

tonight."

"Put your phone away, you have the worst habits I've ever seen in an athlete," James chuckled, trying to reach for Sirius' phone.

"Alright, fine." He turned it off and slid it into his pocket.

Next to him, James leaned back in his chair. "Seriously, is there any reason you insist on keeping up to date on whatever the journalists have to say about us?"

Sirius rolled his shoulders back and looked around the room.

The Swedish team was huddled together on the other side of the room. The US, Australian, and New Zealand teams were all watching the small TV mounted high on the wall; they all had swimmers competing in the Women's 400m Freestyle. The Slovenian team was sitting in their allocated area, but Snape was leaning against the cold, brick wall next to the rest of the team. He caught Sirius' eye.

"I don't know, James. Maybe one day they'll mention something horrible about this prick that could help me throw him off his game for once," Sirius grumbled, eyes still trained on Snape.

James followed his eye line. He clapped a hand on his shoulder. "But really you're just seeking the praise, isn't that right, mate?" It was a nice attempt to distract him, but now Snape was giving him that overly fake smile that he'd come to hate.

Sirius watched as Snape pushed himself off the wall and weaved through the plastic chairs until he stood in front of the British relay team.

Remus was the first to stand and offer a handshake. "Severus, it's good to see you looking so well. Congratulations on your win last night." Snape grasped Remus' hand and shook it, Remus winced and withdrew his hand with a forced, tight-lipped smile.

"Thank you, Remus." Snape reached up behind his head to tighten the bun that contained his thin, black hair. "You looked a little shaky in the warm-ups earlier, try not to dislocate your shoulder again today. You, least of all, deserve something horrible like that."

Remus clenched his jaw and sat back down. He didn't break eye contact with Snape as he pulled on his first cap, tucking in a few sandy locks that peaked out.

It took all of his effort to not show his anger, but Sirius clenched the hand that was resting on his thigh. That injury was a soft spot for Remus, it almost ruined his career as a backstroker before it had even begun. He had to go through weeks of physical rehabilitation before he was allowed back in the pool, then he had to make up for all of the lost time.

"What do you want, Snape?" Sirius all but spat. "Your teammates already sick of you?"

Snape narrowed his focus to Sirius and raised an eyebrow. "Is that any way to speak to a fellow competitor? The BBC would have a frenzy with that one," he tutted. While he spoke with a thick, Slavic accent, his English was precise and piercing. "I'm only here to congratulate James on his victory from yesterday. A silver medal is no easy feat, you must have tried really hard. I meant to say something to you yesterday, but I was a little caught up with-" he waved a hand dismissively, "everything."

Sirius could have maimed him. Maybe he should have taken up boxing in his youth instead of swimming. Every sentence was honey-dipped to hide the poison it truly carried.

An Olympic official entered the Marshalling room and gave them a one-minute warning. Sirius scrunched the caps in his left hand, then quickly unclenched. *Anything to conserve energy*, he told himself.

“This is where I leave you, then. Good luck,” Snape said. As he walked away, he balled up a fist and hit his left pectoral a few times, stimulating the area and increasing the blood flow.

“Prick,” Remus muttered as he fitted his goggles and second cap.

The rest of the team followed Remus’ actions and tried to cast the encounter from their minds. It was a little more difficult for Sirius, but as he recited his coach’s words in his mind - *‘You only have fifty seconds to give it your all, so don’t fuck it up’* - his heart rate started to settle.

Until the announcer’s voice called out, “Great Britain.” His heart rate picked up again.

Remus led the pack, as he was the first leg of the medley, and the rest of the team followed suit. Sirius threw a quick wave up to the crowd, he hoped it was directed at the rest of the British team but he couldn’t quite make them out.

The team discarded their jackets onto the chair at the end of lane 6 and Sirius shook the nervous energy out of his shoulders, jumping up and down on the spot.

“Well, see you all on the other side,” Remus said, grinning. He raised two fingers to his head and gave them a small salute before he approached the starting blocks.

Once the first group of swimmers were given the go-ahead, they jumped into the water and took their positions, gripping onto the sides of the starting blocks.

Sirius looked over to right and found Severus Snape’s cold eyes boring directly into his. His face was expressionless, but he was still slapping various areas of his upper body, like most of the other swimmers. Sirius looked away just in time to watch Remus hoist himself up out of the water and spring backwards to start the race.

While the arena was mostly empty, the cheering from all the different countries’ teams proved to be quite loud. Sirius kept his eye on Remus - he looked like he was in third position as he approached the opposite wall - as he tightened the straps on his goggles. Peter stepped up next to the starting block as Remus flipped and started to propel himself back down the length of the pool.

The changeover was quick - Peter dived in over Remus’ head just as he reached backwards and slammed his palm into the wall. As soon as Peter resurfaced, he threw himself into the strongest breaststroke Sirius had ever seen from him. Remus quickly swam underneath the lane ropes as the rest of the competitors started the second leg and climbed out of the pool.

Still soaking wet, he sidled up to Sirius and ripped his cap off, already holding his goggles in his other hand. James stepped up onto the boom and monitored his breathing with slow, strong intakes.

“How did I go?” Remus asked him.

“Seeing that we’re-” Sirius looked out to the pool again, “-still in the quickest half, I would say you did incredibly well.” Sirius clapped a hand on Remus’ back, spreading some water droplets to his own palm.

“That felt pretty quick, would I be wrong to say that I think that was a personal best?” Remus asked between staggered breaths.

Sirius' eyes diverted to the timer on the opposite side of the pool. "I think it's definitely a possibility, Remus. You did us proud."

"Yeah, and now you just have to bring us home," Remus said. Sirius screwed his face up at how generic it sounded, but Remus was right.

James dived in to complete the butterfly leg, the Swede and Snape entered just after him. Sirius heard Peter whoop from the water and watched as a spray of water leaped up from behind the starting block. Sirius stepped up onto the boom and rested one foot on the starting block. He looked down at Peter, who slapped the water again in glee.

Peter looked up at Sirius, grinning, "That was pretty bloody good."

"And it would be pretty bloody good if you got out, James is almost turning around," Sirius warned. Peter slid under the lane ropes and Sirius stepped up fully onto the starting block.

Don't fuck this up.

He tried to concentrate only on James' approaching figure and his heart rate, but he couldn't help but look at the other lanes. The US was leading by a lot - no surprises there - and Snape had just overtaken James. The Swede - Sirius believed his name was Xenophilius - was level with James, but his energy was obviously starting to dwindle.

Sirius aimed his arms out in front of him and waited, barely daring to breathe as James reached the last stretch of the pool and lunged towards the wall. Sirius threw his hands forward to gain and bit of momentum and dove into the water.

The cold was biting, but he didn't care.

Kick, kick, kick you damn bastard. Legs together, don't come up too early but don't leave it too late. Wait, just hold off a bit more, just a bit more, and BREACH. But don't breathe!

You don't need air yet Sirius, the longer you can stay streamlined, the better. Pull the water harder, don't look to your side, don't do it. Kick, kick, and breathe NOW, dammit. Don't waste time trying to see where everyone else is, you know where the American is, who cares about the Slovs. BREATHE. Just focus on this turn. Lead with your arm, hold your breath. Angle your head down, plant your feet on the wall, and push.

Got it, now streamline as long as you can. Kick, kick, start to surface, good. One, two, three, four, BREATHE. One, two, three, four, BREATHE. Okay, that's all the air you need to finish the race. Keep your head down, point your fucking toes. Feel the weight of the water not just in your palms, but on your forearms too. No, don't think about that ice bath you deserve, think about how much you need to get to the wall.

It's right there, it's in sight, all you need to do is reach out-

Sirius slammed his hand onto the wall and immediately looked behind him. Pulling off his goggles, he squinted as he found Great Britain's flag.

3. GBR - 3:27.51

Sirius rested his head back against the wall and grinned. The last relay team finished and they were instructed to exit the pool. It all remained fuzzy, white noise. He was now an Olympic bronze medallist. Remus waited for him at the edge of the pool and threw his arms around his, holding him tight.

“Mate, you’re brilliant,” Remus laughed and squeezed him tighter.

He was an Olympic bronze medallist.

Remus pulled back and led him around to the rest of the relay team. James all but jumped on Sirius when he saw him too, and Peter reached around to pat Sirius’ back. Two lanes over, they could hear the yanks whooping with celebration. Sirius spared another glance at the scoreboard.

1. USA - 3:26.78 - WR

2. SLO - 3:27.21

A world record, and they was less than a second behind.

When Sirius could eventually take that ice bath, and it wouldn’t be until after his 200m freestyle heat that night, he’d do it with a bronze medal around his neck.

Chapter End Notes

I absolutely love experimenting with a new writing style, and after my semi-slump, this is so refreshing to write.

200m Freestyle

... “Remus Lupin also set a new personal best in his backstroke leg of the Men’s 4 x 100m Medley Relay yesterday with a time of 49.89 seconds. He is set to compete in today’s 100m backstroke final. Joining him in the finals today is Sirius Black, who also swam in the Men’s Medley Relay and won bronze for Great Britain. Black is swimming in the men’s 200m Freestyle final.

“Black qualified with the fourth-fastest time in the Men’s 200m Freestyle semi-final, behind Slovenia’s Severus Snape, France’s Fenrir Greyback, and Australia’s Gilderoy Lockhart. This is Black’s individual Olympic final debut, and we are just as excited as you are to see how he goes. Black’s personal best for this event is 1:44.63, a time he set at the FINA world championships back in 2019.

“Regarding the race today, Snape is quoted saying, ‘I am not concerned about my own performance. I know what I am capable of, I will leave the pool in victory today because I am sure of it. A certain level of confidence is required if you want to compete at this level. Who I am more concerned about are the swimmers whose facades of confidence crumble when I look their way.’

“When we asked him about his long-standing rivalry with Sirius Black, he responded, ‘I was not aware that such a rivalry existed, but if the BBC want to push that sort of pressure onto their already mentally-drained athletes, then I will not stand in their way.’ He gave no further comment.”...

Sirius turned off his phone without prompting, he couldn’t rely on Remus or James to distract him from his bad habits when he was waiting alone in the Marshalling room. That wasn’t entirely accurate, Sirius was surrounded by competitors from other countries, but the only other British swimmer was sitting in his allocated chair at the back of the room. Sirius had never spoken to her before, and he wasn’t sure he was in the right headspace to carry a conversation.

He had been sitting down too long. Sirius stood up and crossed his arms over his chest. He tried to will away the urge to nervously tap his foot.

Every so often, his eyes drifted to the TV screen on the wall to his right. Marlene McKinnon was in the pool swimming the women’s 800m freestyle, she was in fifth position and there were still eight laps to go. The swimmers in first and second were incredibly close, but there was a growing divide between them and the rest of the competition. If Marlene could hold her current pace, she could slide into third position.

His eyes were drawn away from the screen by a movement on the edge of his field of vision. Snape rose to his feet, and Sirius looked away, uninterested. If Snape didn’t think he was serious competition, he would treat him the same way.

Then there was more movement, and Sirius could feel the heat of another person standing just behind him. The sensation of faint breathing on the back of his neck triggered goosebumps to rise along his skin. The person behind him - Snape, of course - started his pre-race ritual of warming up his muscles by slapping them.

“Do you mind?” Sirius bit out.

“I’m only trying to get a better look at the television, it looks like the girls are almost done,” Snape’s voice was soft and artificially calm.

Sirius tried to concentrate on the race again, Marlene had caught up and was positioned to win bronze after all. Snape cleared his throat and hit his upper arm muscles.

“Do you not believe in social distancing?” Sirius asked, turning to face the man.

“We’re both vaccinated,” Snape replied curtly.

Sirius scoffed and turned back. He tried to ignore Snape, who insisted on breathing down Sirius’ neck until the marshall called for all the competitors in the 200m freestyle to make their way to the front of the room. Sirius tugged at the edges of his caps, making sure they were both secure.

The marshall led them out to the pool deck and instructed them to wait until the announcer called their name. One by one, the swimmers with the slowest qualifying times were called. Sirius felt that breathing on the back of his neck again.

“Play nice out there, Black. The cameras are watching,” Snape whispered, leaning into Sirius a little bit so he could hear him through the plastic of the cap. He could feel the broad span of his chest against his back. Sirius pushed back, dislodging the man.

Before Sirius had a chance to verbally respond, the announcer called his name. “Sirius Black, Great Britain, Lane Six.”

Sirius walked onto the pool deck and noticed for the first time that camera flashes accompanied his arrival. It killed him to admit that Snape was right. He waved at the small group of cameras and then looked out into the crowd and gave them a bigger wave. This time he spotted the British team in the stands and pointed at them, grinning.

As the rest of the swimmers were announced, Sirius focused on laying his jacket to rest perfectly over the back of his chair. He swung his arms in large, circular motions and tried to control his breathing. He gave one final adjustment to his goggles and approached the starting block.

The block was on the right setting for once. Sirius waited by the edge of the pool for the rest of the athletes to ready up. He made the mistake of looking at Snape again, who refused to look away from him as he shrugged off his jacket and brought his goggles down over his eyes. Sirius looked away, but he could still feel the bastard's gaze.

‘Who I am more concerned about are the swimmers whose facades of confidence crumble when I look their way.’

The first buzzer sounded and Sirius stepped up onto the starting block. He bent forward to grasp the edge of the block, waiting for the next signal.

“Take your marks.”

Tension coursed through Sirius’ body as he positioned himself to start.

Beep.

Sirius flew forward, arms pressed tight against the sides of his head and hands angled towards the water. The cold water surrounded him and he started to kick.

Legs together, don’t get ahead of yourself. Legs together, and separate. Start stroking, for fucks sake. Is that the quickest you can go?

‘You only have fifty seconds to give it your all, so don’t fuck it up’. Yeah, fifty seconds and then

you can collapse. Then you can breathe. But no, Sirius, this is longer, sustain yourself. Don't forget to breathe, moron. Kick. Kick. No, don't look over at where Australia is, they aren't important. Whatever you do, don't look to your right. Breathe to your left. Breathe, you idiot.

First flip, don't fuck it up. Don't look at where everyone else is as you turn- is that where Snape is? No, stop it, keep going. Kick faster, kick faster, your legs don't hurt, you only think they hurt.

Second flip, dolphin kick, come up, come UP, dammit. Look at the line, convince yourself that it's the most interesting thing you've ever seen. Whatever it takes to stop you from looking to your right- NO, WHY DID YOU DO THAT? You've got work to do Sirius. Kick your legs faster, you shouldn't be able to feel them, that's normal.

Third flip, nailed it. You deserve a bit of praise at this point. But don't get too comfortable, now you have to sprint. Pump your arms faster. One, two, three, four, BREATHE. One, two, hold off, BREATHE. That's it, no more air. Make it to the wall, make it to the fucking wall or so help me God-

If Sirius ever met him, he would kill the personification of his inner monologue. Remus would point out that that would be himself, but then he would counter it with, "Shut up, I just won a silver medal."

1. SLO - Severus Snape - 1:41.91 - WR

2. GBR - Sirius Black - 1:43.71

3. FRA - Fenrir Greyback - 1:44.82

Sirius stopped reading and let himself momentarily sink underwater. He could have swum better than that. He ripped both of his caps and his pair of goggles off and smiled. He could have swum better than that.

But he still won silver. His first, individual Olympic medal. All his own effort.

A World fucking Record. Sirius fought the urge to scoff. Didn't Phelps hold that record? Sirius wasn't sure, but he would guess so.

He glanced over to Snape's lane. The man grinned and let out an elated laugh. He pulled himself up onto the lane rope and raised both his arms in triumph. A voice from his childhood echoed in his ears, it sounded like the amalgamation of every lifeguard he'd ever heard:

"Don't touch the lane ropes!"

How he wished he could yell that one sentence now.

Sirius swam underneath the lane ropes and climbed out of the pool. There were a few cameras pointing at him, so he waved into them. He found the BBC poolside camera and blew a kiss into that one.

"Sirius!" A deep voice called out. Sirius spun around and pursed his lips as he watched Snape climb out of the pool. In his left hand, he held his caps and goggles, his wet, black hair hung loosely above his shoulders. He walked up to Sirius and extended his right hand. "Well done."

Appearances. Sirius grasped his hand tightly and shook it, but he refused to wear the same faux kind expression that Snape had.

“Didn’t I remind you of something before the race?” Snape said, only loud enough for the two of them to hear.

The cameras. Sirius straightened his posture and forced a smile onto his face. “Of course, congratulations,” he replied louder.

Snape retracted his hand. “I don’t think that will cut it,” he whispered as he walked past Sirius.

Sirius stayed frozen until he was ushered along by a marshall, directing him towards a waiting area for the medal ceremony. He spotted Marlene McKinnon, who was still grinning from her own event.

“Great race, seriously. You’re a real Olympian now,” she said.

“Hey, I got a bronze in the Medley Relay,” Sirius defended.

“We all know that doesn’t really count,” Marlene teased, elbowing him gently in the ribs.

The friendly banter was a nice change of pace, he didn’t have to watch his back anymore. Until the next race, of course, but he would try to stay away from the tabloids in the meantime. God knows they’d only be focusing on that "uncalled for" scowl that he just gave Snape. Who cares? He's a silver medallist.

4 x 100m Freestyle Relay

... “The country watched yesterday as Great Britain had its most successful day in the pool thus far. Marlene McKinnon was the first medal-winner of the day, winning Bronze in the Women’s 800m Freestyle. Next was Sirius Black in the Men’s 200m Freestyle. He won a Silver medal and set a new personal best in the process. Later in the morning, Remus Lupin also won a Silver medal in his 100m Backstroke final. In the last event of the day, Peter Pettigrew won a Bronze medal in the Men’s 200m Breaststroke.

“Many have speculated over the controversial image (see below) of Sirius Black and Severus Snape, the Men’s 200m Freestyle gold medallist, shaking hands after the race. The general consensus appears to be that both swimmers are feeling strained due to their alleged rivalry. Black appears to be scowling at the gold medallist, while Snape seems to be sporting a rather smug expression. We asked the Black’s coach, Alastor Moody, for input:

“‘Black is a great swimmer, as is Snape, can’t you write an article about their achievements instead of this drivel?’ His comment was edited for brevity.”...

Sirius chuckled to himself as he reread Moody’s statement. It truly must have been a slow news day if they wanted to publish a quote from his coach attacking their journalism.

“Anyone else read what Moody said to BBC News?” Sirius asked, looking around at the rest of the 4 x 100m Freestyle Relay team. James shook his head but looked curious. Remus raised an eyebrow, beckoning Sirius to read out the quote. Regulus laughed, throwing his head back and catching the attention of the Chinese relay team a metre over.

“Yes, someone please give that man a pay rise,” Regulus said, grinning as he tightened the band on his goggles. He rolled the plastic around in his hands, something Sirius knew to be a sign of nervousness. It was his first and only final at this Olympics, and Regulus was struggling to cling to his usual chilled facade. Poking fun at the tabloids may give him some much needed appeasement before the race.

Sirius cleared his throat and repeated Moody’s quote. James laughed, bracing his hand on Sirius’ shoulder as he doubled over in his chair. Remus knitted his eyebrows together. There was a flicker of amusement threatening to make itself visible through a smile, but Remus reigned it in to play the part of ‘concerned friend’.

“He really shouldn’t be saying things like that. They really don’t need any extra ammunition against us right now, especially where you are concerned,” Remus said.

“Those were my thoughts too, Remus,” a voice sounded from directly behind Sirius. He twisted in his chair, fingers curling over the edge of the plastic back to look up into the cold eyes of Severus Snape. “Your own country seems to be more interested in your personal lives than your achievements. Although, those achievements only seem to be a handful of silver and bronze medals.”

“Good morning to you too, Severus,” Remus greeted coolly.

“Do you have anything else to add? Otherwise, bugged off,” Sirius all but spat.

Severus feigned a look of shock, which twisted into something akin to patronisation on his severe features. “Aren’t we cheerful today? What I really wanted to do was wish you all luck. We don’t

often get along, but one of us has to take down the American team.”

Sirius wondered what the catch was as Severus set a pale hand down on his shoulder. His grip was tight, so much so that Sirius imagined there would be pink marks on his skin when he lifted his hand.

“That’s very kind of you,” Remus said curtly. “Good luck to your team too.”

“It would take a miracle for you all to place after only qualifying sixth, but it would be nice to see you on the podium with us,” Severus continued. There it was, that jagged, backhanded encouragement the man was so well known for.

“Piss off,” Regulus scowled. Sirius didn’t think that he and his brother looked much alike, but when Regulus’ face contorted with anger, he could see some of the resemblance peeking through.

Severus barely spared a glance at Sirius’ brother, and he didn’t bother giving a response. He raised a hand to give the team a casual, goodbye wave, and Sirius turned back around in his chair. The hand on his left shoulder lifted, Sirius didn’t want to look at the faint imprint it must have left behind.

Shortly after, the hand reappeared on his opposite shoulder. Those fine-boned fingers curled into his skin, digging into his deltoid. He felt the familiar tickling of the other’s thin hair against the side of his face, the ends dragging on his neck.

“Try to keep a level head out there. You know this race doesn’t matter, but race tomorrow does,” Severus whispered directly into his ear. He spoke so closely that Sirius swore he felt his lips touch the shell of his ear. Sirius jerked away, not daring to look at the prick. The hand left his shoulder and Sirius heard his footsteps retreating.

“What did he say?” Remus asked, arms crossed comfortably over his chest.

The marshall appeared at the head of the room, calling them all to attention.

“Don’t worry about it,” Sirius muttered as he quickly pulled on his cap. Remus looked a little crestfallen at Sirius’ response.

The Great Britain team were the third to be called. Each of them waved at the stands and the limited audience as they made their way to their designated lane. They huddled around the chair at the end of the lane and Sirius pulled his goggles and second cap on. As the rest of the teams filtered out, James approached the block and adjusted it.

Anchoring the relay was never an easy feat, and Sirius was already a little shaken. It’s true, they only had the sixth quickest qualifying time for the finals, and they were wedged between the Chinese and Australian relay teams. The US and the Slovenian teams got the middle lanes of the pool, Sirius studied both of them out of the corner of his eye.

The entire United States team was unnaturally tall and broad, Sirius wished they chose to pick up athletics as children instead of swimming. He was in the same heat as the US anchor in tonight’s 100m Freestyle heat and, if everything went accordingly, he would be up against him in tomorrow’s final. It would be Sirius’ last event for these Olympics.

If everything went to shit, he could still boast two medals - a privilege not shared by many. Still, he hoped that everything *wouldn’t* go to shit.

As the first buzzer sounded, signalling to the leading swimmers to climb the starting blocks, Sirius

turned his attention to the Slovenian team.

There was willowy Severus Snape, of course, anchoring alongside Sirius, giving him a taste of what he would experience in the 100m Freestyle final tomorrow. More accurately, it was less like a taste and more like a mouthful with Snape, who somehow knew that Sirius was looking at him and decided to smirk at him. Sirius looked at the man on the lane 5 starting block - Lucius Malfoy. A preening asshole who Sirius didn't have to interact with often. The other half of the team was comprised of a tall, broad Igor Karkaroff, and a slimmer, agile-looking Anton Avery Jr. The former looked close to retiring age, while the latter looked as new as Regulus. Sirius had caved late last night and researched the Slovenian team, trying to convince himself that Snape was blowing their skill level out of proportion.

It had done nothing to calm his nerves.

Sirius turned back to his own team in time to see James dive into the water. He got out to a good start, keeping pace with both the US and the Slovenian swimmers. Regulus stepped up onto the platform at James reached the other wall and turned back. He was nervous for both of them. Being able to share a medal with his brother would be the highlight of the games, more so than the feeling of kicking Snape's teeth in once all this was over.

"You know this race doesn't matter."

Sirius would show him.

Regulus dove into the pool, arching over James' head. His reaction time was unparalleled, quicker even than Sirius'. Remus, who was more interested in the statistics, had informed him that Regulus had the quickest average reaction time on Great Britain's swim team.

It didn't matter that they didn't swim their fastest last night. This team was *lethal*.

Remus stepped onto the block and held his arms out in front of him. His head tracked Regulus' movement as he made his way back down the pool. Something wet brushed against Sirius' shoulder - James gently nudged him with his own shoulder.

"I blew them out of the water, don't you think?" James joked, water still dripping down his face.

Remus dove in, they were contesting for third place with Australia, the US and Slovenia were well ahead.

"I could barely see you, mate," Sirius chuckled, "you were that quick."

"You just have to bring us home now, don't let my hard work go to waste," James teased as he slung an arm around Sirius and quickly squeezed him.

Sirius wasn't going to let that happen.

Against his own will, he spared one last glance at the Slovenian lane. Snape was *still* looking at him; he hadn't even pulled on his goggles yet, he just fixed Sirius with that same smug look.

Sirius stepped up onto the block and tried to cast that look, those eyes, that *fucking* face from his mind. He rolled his shoulders back a few times and stretched out his back before aiming his hands in front of him. He slowed his breathing as he watched Remus approach the wall, not lifting his head to breathe. He didn't dare look at the other lanes, he didn't want to know where they were.

Remus slammed his hand into the wall and Sirius pushed forward. He pointed his toes as his legs

trailed behind him and his fingers breached the surface of the water first. Biting cold surrounded him, but he was kicking straight away.

Legs together, legs together, legs together, hands tight, and UP. Don't breathe. Don't breathe. One, two, three, four, kick faster, dammit, five, six, seven, eight, BREATHE. Look at that boring fucking black line, ignore the cameras following you. They don't matter, the only thing that matters is reaching that fucking wall. Pull, pull, pull, kick, kick. BREATHE. Okay, no more breaths on this lap, you don't need them. Kick, kick, one, two, and FLIP.

You almost lost your footing, you're better than this. Legs together, legs together, push the fucking water and START STROKING. One, two, three, four, do you seriously already have to breathe? Breathe then, dammit, how are you going to make it in the heats tonight? Stroke, two, three, four, stroke, two, three, four. Breathe. Kick, kick, head down, see if the cameras can pick up a wink. Breathe. Okay, no more breaths, the wall is right there. Get to the wall, get to the fucking wall-

Sirius slammed his hand into the wall as hard as he could. Shockwaves travelled up his arm as he turned to look at the time. From behind him, he heard Regulus swear and felt a hand grip his shoulder for the umpteenth time that morning.

1. SLO - 3:07.52

2. USA - 3:08.97

3. GBR - 3:10.01

Sirius smiled as he dipped below the water. He pulled his caps off and flung them backwards, hoping that James, Remus, or Regulus would catch them. He turned to shake hands with the Chinese anchor, who smiled back at him, then turned to do the same with the Australian swimmer. Once he released his hand, he slid underneath the lane ropes and swam to the edge of the pool.

As he pulled himself out, he found Snape standing there, waiting for him again. While Sirius was still kneeling on one knee, an outstretched hand entered his vision. The fingers were long and thin, the palms the same. A scar rested at the base of the thumb.

“Well done, you kept up,” Snape said softly. When Sirius looked up at him, he noted that none of that softness carried over into his face. His wet hair hung like tendrils, framing his face and making his cheekbones look more severe. His chest rose and fell, emphasised by the motion of his prominent collarbones. His mouth twisted into a crooked smile, carrying that smug, condescending nature that Sirius loathed.

No, he wouldn't give him the satisfaction. He batted his hand away, he didn't care who could see. Next to Snape, Sirius could see the American anchor looking rather dejected. He guessed that Snape had brushed him off so he could focus on terrorising Sirius instead.

Snape was right, in a sense. This race didn't matter, in terms of publicity. All that mattered was the race tomorrow, and Sirius was determined to knock that superior smile off *Severus'* face.

100m Freestyle

... “After bringing his relay team to a bronze medal placing yesterday, Sirius Black qualified with the second quickest time for the Men’s 100m Freestyle final later this morning. It is the last event of the morning, following Alice Longbottom’s 200m Breaststroke final, for which she has the fourth quickest qualifying time.

“Black qualifies after Severus Snape, who is pictured with Black below after yesterday’s Men’s Freestyle Relay final. Black appears to be hitting Snape’s hand away, something which was alleged to be a faux sign of sportsmanship. In the back of the photograph is American swimmer Fabian Prewett, looking trounced and agitated after Snape ignored his handshake following his team’s defeat.

“We spoke with Tom Riddle, the Slovenian swim coach, about the ongoing animosity between the British freestyler and Slovenian all-rounder. He is quoted saying:

“‘My athlete is in his prime, physically speaking. He’s never swum better than he is now, he’s constantly breaking his own personal bests. I think he has every right to be proud of his accomplishments, and I don’t believe that’s arrogance. It’s no surprise that there are swimmers who feel threatened by him, but we can’t control their actions and how they respond to my athlete. He simply has to push past it all and continue doing what he does best - swim. I can understand how that could be hard for other athletes.’”...

Sirius’s phone almost snapped in half in his grip. If his coach spoke like that, no wonder Snape was such a headache to be around. ‘My athlete’, like he’d forgotten his name.

That was besides the fact that not a single word of that coach’s statement had been true. Snape was arrogant, he could just let his victories speak for themselves, but that was never enough. It was never Sirius who approached Snape, who wanted to get inside his head and make him feel like a bug under a microscope, it was the other way around. There was no reason for Snape to rely on such tactics. He was a cunt, plain and simple.

“Get off your phone or I’ll break your hand,” Regulus threatened. “You don’t need to read whatever junk they’re writing about you today.”

“I know, I was about to put it away,” Sirius agreed. He turned his phone off and slid it into his pocket. He looked out across the pool, the first race of the day had just finished and Great Britain had no swimmers in the water. In a few races time, he would have to leave the stands and make his way down to the marshalling room.

“You’ll show them up today anyways, Sirius. I have a good feeling,” James said, leaning around Regulus so he could see Sirius.

“Aw shucks, you really think so?” Sirius teased. He grinned at his friend to hide his nerves.

“Of course, mate,” Remus chimed in. “And if not, there’s always the Worlds next year.”

“You couldn’t help but dose him with a bit of pessimism, could you?” James shook his head and narrowed his eyes at Remus.

“It’s not pessimism-”

“It is so!”

“Shut up, already,” Sirius drawled. “You’ll miss the next race.”

James and Remus lapsed into an uneasy silence for the length of the race, but both shouted in celebration when Dorcas placed second in the Women’s 200m Backstroke. Sirius wished he could be as happy as they were, but it was hard to concentrate. He was going over his race strategy in his head.

Several minutes lapsed as the first medal ceremony happened, then Alastor Moody’s face appeared in his field of vision. His wrinkled forehead creased as he looked down at Sirius. “You’re up, kid.”

Each of his friends and his brother reached over to pat his back in encouragement. It was a nice gesture, Sirius thought.

He left the stands and followed the stairs down to the marshalling room, the air getting cooler the lower he sank. Stone walls covered in chipped, white paint followed him through the back rooms of the centre until he reached the room he was looking for.

The room held the usual amount of athletes. Some were standing and stretching, others were sitting in plastic chairs. There was a line of chairs along the closest wall of the room that was sparsely filled. Sirius found the chair in the lane 5 row and sunk into it. He shed his jacket to start working on some upper body stretches.

“You’re early today,” a voice said to Sirius’ side. It was low and heavily accented.

“I’m here at the same time every day, Snape,” Sirius argued. He reached up and pulled on his head to stretch out his traps.

“Are you sure?”

“Of course I am.” He shouldn’t even be responding.

“I guess that means you have more time to talk to me today, you weren’t that eager yesterday,” Snape said.

“Implying that you *are* eager to talk?” Sirius asked, finally looking over at the man sitting in the chair next to him.

Snape, like Sirius, had shed his jacket and sat in his racing suit. His hair hung loosely around his face, dry for once. He had one elbow propped up on the arm of the plastic chair and he fixed Sirius with his cold, black eyes. “Of course, you’re a great source of entertainment.”

“Don’t pretend to be my friend, it’s unbecoming,” Sirius shot back.

“I’m doing nothing of the sort, you don’t have to respond, but you just can’t seem to hold your tongue.” Throughout their whole conversation, Snape’s face never flickered with any sort of emotion, until now. A small, almost cruel smile crept onto his face.

Sirius could feel his blood pressure rising again. When all this was done, regardless of whether he or Snape ended up winning this race, he was going to kick Snape’s teeth in. He always had to have the upper hand, but Sirius wondered how he would react if he launched a fist into his cheek.

“What are you thinking about?” Snape asked, a parody of pillow talk that felt taunting and bloodthirsty in the current context.

And Sirius pieced it all together. Snape *had* to know what everyone was thinking at any given

moment. That's how he could predict what would happen next - in the pool, in conversation. That's why Snape always affected Sirius so much, because Sirius *couldn't hold his tongue*. Every time he spoke, he was unknowingly giving out clues to his inner psyche, and Snape knew how to manipulate those feelings to best suit him.

Sirius held his tongue.

"No comment? I'm not surprised, you don't look like you have a lot going on inside your mind," Snape mused.

Sirius tuned him out for the next half an hour. As they moved through the room, closer and closer to the opening of the pool deck, Sirius continued to ignore Snape's attempts at seemingly innocent conversation. Sirius fought back a grin, there was one less weight on his chest. He had never felt so clear-headed before a race. In a way, he had Snape to thank for that. He would have to let the other man know.

The marshall called them to attention. Sirius pulled on his caps and goggles, but didn't pull his goggles down over his eyes yet. Instead, he let them rest tightly on his forehead.

One by one, the competitors were called out to the pool deck, and Sirius could hear the audience applaud each one. The man before Sirius was called, and as soon as he stepped out onto the pool deck, Sirius felt a familiar hand on his shoulder. Snape pressed his long form against his back, and Sirius could feel his every breath. If he was attempting to crowd him, make him feel small, it wasn't working. Not anymore.

"I'm sure you'll do great," Snape whispered, but his tone was anything but sweet. Christ, he couldn't even give a compliment without twisting it into sarcasm.

"I'm sure I will, too," Sirius replied quietly. Snape didn't have a chance to respond before Sirius' name was announced. He pulled away from the warm grip of the other man and stepped out onto the pool deck. He waved up at the crowd as they cheered. That was one feeling he would never grow tired of.

He made his way to Lane 5 and adjusted the position of the diving block, pulling it back one slot. Through the din, he heard Snape's name being called. He emerged onto the pool deck and waved at his own team in the stands. He settled into the lane next to Sirius.

As soon as he could, he caught Snape's eye. The other man's face was cautiously blank. Sirius raised a hand between them and grinned. Snape faltered for a moment before he hastily shook Sirius' hand. Next to them, he could hear cameras clicking, could feel the stare of the lens on him. Give them all something to chew on.

Sirius pulled back first and straightened his posture. His gaze lingered on Snape. *You're done.*

The first buzzer sounded and Sirius walked back over to the end of the pool. He stepped up onto the starting block and let his arms hang for a moment. Just before the verbal mark, he bent over and curled his fingers around the end of the block. The second buzzer sounded and Sirius sprung forward, snapping his arms into position as he dove into the water.

Kick your legs, kick your legs, together, up, down. Angle your hands up, start to surface, and start stroking. Good, you've made good ground. Don't breathe yet, see how much further you can get first. Follow the line, ignore the burning of your arms, they can't decide if they're hot or cold. Breathe now. Good.

Okay, here's the turn. Get as close as possible, throw your weight forward, plant your feet on the wall, push and twist. Good. Kick, keeping kicking. Start moving your arms. You're doing well. Breathe. Kick, kick, one, two, one, two. You're almost done. Breathe. No more breaths, work with the water and the distance you have left. Kick, kick, kick, head down. Pierce the water with your fingertips and pull.

There's the junction between the wall and the floor. All you have to do is stretch, reach, and slam your hand into the wall-

Sirius floated underwater, not turning around. Once he surfaced, he gasped and ripped his caps off, shaking out his soaked curls. He turned.

1. GBR - Sirius Black - 46:98 - OR

2. SLO - Severus Snape - 47:08

“No fucking way,” Sirius barely registered the soft words that fell from his mouth. There had to be a camera trained on him somewhere, he really shouldn't swear. *Fuck that.* He grinned and shouted nothing in particular, just letting out all of the last four years of effort, of pain, of stress. All for this.

“Come on!” He yelled louder. He broke an *Olympic fucking record*. One that was held by Severus Snape himself, set back in the Rio games. He ducked back under the water, letting the water cool his flushed skin. Once he resurfaced, he turned to face his rival in the lane next to him.

Snape, like Sirius, had taken off his cap and goggles, and he had a smile plastered on his face. It looked fairly genuine, so Sirius reached across to grasp his hand. When he felt Snape's fingers slide against his own, he felt the other's grip tighten. He almost winced under the pressure, and Sirius looked back up at Snape. There was something unreadable in his eyes, akin to a fire that refused to be put out. Sirius dropped his hand and didn't let his face falter.

Nothing could take this moment away from him.

He slid under the lane ropes and exited the pool. The usual array of cameras lined the sides of the pool and they tracked his movements. He waved into them, still sporting a grin. He made his way back to the chair at the end of his lane to retrieve his jacket.

Then the usual rounds started, he passed each of the cameras with the rest of the athletes until he reached the designated BBC area. One of the reporters got his attention by calling his name.

“Before we interview you, bring Snape over. We want a picture of the two of you,” the reporter said. Sirius looked over his shoulder, Snape wasn't too far behind him.

“Severus,” Sirius called him over by his first name, he hoped he didn't look too smug. Snape's head whipped around to locate who was calling his name. His eyes flashed when he realised it was Sirius. “Come here, they want a photo.”

Snape didn't object. He sidled up next to Sirius and slid an arm around his shoulders. Sirius fought the chill the action triggered in him.

“You boys have been keeping yourselves entertained with your little stories,” Snape addressed the reporters.

“You've been keeping up with the news?” One asked.

“Of course, fiction is my favourite genre.” He pulled his arm back from around Sirius and left without saying anything else. Sirius watched him walk away and spotted his hands clenching and unclenching at his sides. He was determined to find out exactly what that meant, but he could save that for later.

Home Run?

Chapter Notes

This is what you all came for, here it finally is!

Sirius hadn't checked his phone once that night, he was far too busy. The swimming season had finished, and the team was busy celebrating. Back in the Olympic village, some of the Australian athletes had set up a game of cricket that James was now participating in. Peter was off mingling with some tennis players from other Commonwealth countries, Regulus was trading social media handles with some of the Spanish gymnasts, and Remus was sitting next to Sirius, observing it all.

"You ever thought you'd end up here?" Remus asked.

Sirius chuckled, "No, I thought I wasn't even going to qualify this year, let alone win a gold medal."

"You don't have to act so humble when it's just the two of us," Remus said, nudging Sirius with his elbow. Sirius chuckled again, that was probably true.

"I'm only trying to emulate my favourite athlete. He's the most humble guy I know," Sirius smiled.

"Who is it, Snape?" Remus offered.

Sirius whacked Remus' arm. "It's you, you prick," Sirius answered.

Remus stood up to evade Sirius' attack. "Well if that's true, we have something in common. I happen to be my favourite athlete too."

"I take back what I said about you being humble," Sirius rolled his eyes, but also rose to his feet.

The sun had sunk below the horizon, churning pinks and oranges into the soft blue sky. The light was falling, and it was about time that Sirius started mingling. He didn't feel like joining in on the cricket, his shoulders were killing him. As he started to move towards the large group of intermingled people, he spotted a familiar blonde swimmer.

Lucius Malfoy? What business did he have in this part of the Olympic Village? Sirius watched as he weaved through the crowd, seemingly determined to reach Regulus. Sirius couldn't begin to guess why.

"What do you think that's about- Remus?" His friend, who was just at his side, had vanished into the crowd without a word. Sirius looked around and spotted his head of sandy hair through the sea of people.

Just as he began to move in that direction to pursue his friend, a long hand wrapped itself around his bicep and tugged him in the opposite direction. He stumbled over himself as he was pulled backwards until he managed to twist around.

"Snape?" He got no answer, the raven-haired man just continued to lead Sirius away from the crowd. Sirius yanked his arm free just as they entered a lobby of a nearby apartment building. The

lobby was deserted and the lights were dim, the ambience added to the frightening stare Snape was giving him.

“What the fuck?” Sirius spat. He pushed his hands against Snape’s chest and shoved him, he was still all too close.

“I should be asking you that,” Snape answered, with just as much vitriol in his voice as Sirius.

Sirius faltered momentarily, he had never heard the other man sound so angry before. He was always in excess of confidence, borderline arrogance, an aloof person who never let anything get to him. His one sole mission besides winning seemed to be making as many enemies as possible.

But this Snape, the one who huffed with anger and ripped his black, cloth face mask off to reveal a crooked snarl, was one that Sirius had never encountered before. It made something foreign shoot through his body, a mix of excitement and fear. A dangerous concoction.

“Oh, really?” Sirius sneered, desperate to know exactly why Snape felt the need to drag him away from everyone like that.

“Yes, really. You absolute *bastard*, Black.” Snape punctuated the words with a sharp shove to Sirius’ chest. “You know that was supposed to be my win today, but you couldn’t help yourself, could you?”

“*Your* win?” Sirius scoffed. “I thought that *I* was supposed to be the arrogant one here. What was it that set you off? Was it the fact that I won despite your constant intimidation, or that I managed to break your record in the process?”

“Fuck you,” Snape spat, delivering another shove to Sirius’ chest. It was harder than the last, and Sirius took a step back to keep his balance.

Cunt. Sirius curled his fist and punched Snape, he aimed for his jaw but caught his lip instead. Snape’s head whipped to the side as he stumbled back a couple of steps. Snape brought a thin hand up to his face and gingerly touched his lip. His fingers came back red with blood.

And now the only thing Sirius could feel was regret. He quickly looked around to see if anyone had witnessed him punching an Olympian in the face. The foyer was still deserted, and he could barely see the crowds of people in the distance through the windows. He could only get away with this if Snape agreed to let it go.

Sirius looked back at Snape, who was smiling down at the blood on his fingertips. His bottom lip was split on the right, and some of the blood had smeared down onto his chin. The sight unnerved Sirius, this was the man that Sirius had to beg too?

If Sirius could have his way, he would hit Snape again. And again. And again. But now, his career was more important, this *couldn’t* get out.

Snape turned and walked away in silence. No scathing insult, no attempt to return the fire, no threat to his integrity. That wasn’t like him at all.

“Wait, where are you going?” Sirius called out after him. Snape didn’t answer, he entered a corridor that had doors leading to apartments on either side. Sirius followed close behind, but he wasn’t entirely sure why.

They both followed the hotel’s layout as they turned corners and bypassed dozens of apartments. Sirius lingered behind, eyeing the blood on Snape’s fingers where his hand hung by his side.

They stopped in front of one of the doors; this one led to room 157. Snape fished a key from his pocket and slid it into the lock. He shook the key around, willing the damn thing to work and Sirius could empathise with that frustration. The lock to his own room was similar, no matter how hard he tried, it never wanted to open.

Snape got the door open and Sirius asked again, "Where are you going?"

"I'm going to ice my lip, I don't want it to swell," Snape answered, his back facing Sirius.

Was that all? Sirius furrowed his brow, trying to remember why on Earth he followed Snape back to his room. It was obvious he wasn't going to use this against him, otherwise he would have made a scene in the lobby. He wouldn't have returned to that stoic slate that Sirius knew so well.

"You're wondering why you followed me here?" Snape asked, he turned to face Sirius this time. Sirius nodded slowly, confused as to how he knew what was racing through his mind. "I'm wondering the same thing."

Snape finally returned the punch. Sirius saw the fist coming towards his face and failed to move in time, his cheekbone exploded with pain.

"*Fuck,*" Sirius groaned, he wouldn't be surprised if his skin split from that. He didn't bother checking, he now had a one-track mind. *So he wanted a fight.*

Sirius lunged at Snape, wrapping his arms around his middle and sending them crashing to the floor inside Snape's apartment. They hit the ground harshly and Snape was quick enough to avoid smacking his head against the ground. While they were down, Sirius delivered a punch to the side of Snape's ribcage. The other groaned in pain and tried to shove Sirius up off him.

While Snape tried to get his bearings, Sirius darted up and kicked the door shut. Snape tried to sweep his feet out from under him, but Sirius dodged his leg. Snape got to his feet and immediately dodged the punch Sirius sent his way. Sirius didn't pull back quick enough and caught a jab to his ribs. The sensation reverberated into his lungs, spasmed his diaphragm and knocked the air out of him.

"You fucking-"

As he clutched his ribs, Sirius stole Snape's earlier move and tried to knock Snape with a sweep of his leg. Snape stumbled back into the open area of his apartment but managed to maintain his footing. Sirius rushed forward and swung a fist at Snape's left cheek using his spare hand. The feeling of skin on skin and the grunt of pain gave Sirius a burst of energy. He pulled his other hand away from his ribs and delivered a hook punch to Severus' side.

It was equal part ecstasy and rage. Sirius could barely feel the stinging on his face or the dull throbbing in his torso. Snape *deserved* this after all the emotional distress he put everyone through, mostly himself.

Sirius aimed another punch at Snape's face, but it was caught before it found its target. Snape enclosed his hand around Sirius' fist and used it as leverage to push him back. Sirius stumbled backwards until his back met the wall.

Snape was in front of him in an instant, reaching out to pin Sirius to the wall by his shoulders. The movement manipulated his posture and Sirius found himself too close to Snape. Sirius darted his hands up to grab at Snape's jacket collar and neck.

Somewhere along the way, the wires got crossed. There was passion, heat, energy, and a desire to

make the other collapse. They kissed, a brutal mockery of lovers that lacked that fundamental, gentle consideration for one another. Sirius bit at the spot where he split Snape's lip, and the other winced but pushed back with an equal amount of malice. Snape's tongue invaded Sirius' mouth, and the coppery taste was almost enough to distract him from the fact that the Slovenian was now tearing away at his clothing.

Sirius roughly yanked at Snape's Slovenian team jacket, and he heard the fabric tear just before Snape did. He pulled back and looked down at his jacket, which now had a massive tear that ran parallel to the zipper. Snape looked up at him, and Sirius raised a defiant eyebrow.

He heard the sharp crack of Snape's hand across his cheek before he felt it. Sirius' head whipped to the side with the momentum of his hand. As he recovered from the backhand, he watched Snape shrug his jacket off his shoulders and throw it over the back of a nearby chair.

"You vindictive asshole, you have no care for anyone but yourself," Snape spat.

Sirius reached out and grabbed Snape's black t-shirt by the collar. The fabric tore away easily under his grip, it's like it was made to be destroyed. He ripped it down the middle, pushed the sleeves down Snape's arms and dropped the remains of the shirt.

"Look who's talking," Sirius countered. He took in the sight of the man before him, one he had seen so many times before. It was a pity he wasn't dripping wet, that's when he looked his best. Sirius looked up from his chest and took in the ruined sight of Snape's face. The blood from his lip had spread, likely onto Sirius' face too, adding to the array of burst capillaries spread across a few areas on his torso.

Snape kissed him again, crowding his space and continuing in his task of ridding Sirius of his clothes. Somewhere in the back of his mind, Sirius faintly realised that he still had to leave in those clothes.

One of Snape's hands made its way into Sirius' hair, grabbing a handful and pulling his head back. Sirius screwed his eyes shut as the pain raced across his scalp and ran straight to his dick. He felt Snape's teeth sink into the junction between his neck and his shoulder. The other man ground his hips into Sirius', he could feel the heat from the man's erection through the material of his track pants.

In the next few minutes, both of them lost the rest of their clothes, and Snape's hand returned to fist Sirius' hair at the base of his head. He gripped it near the root and pulled Sirius up with it. Sirius nearly lost his balance with the force Snape used.

Snape used that leverage to all but throw him against the polished wooden table that stood in the middle of the room. It was circular and cool under Sirius' skin. Sirius huffed and pushed himself back to his feet and looked over his shoulder. Snape was fishing through a drawer, Sirius eyed the long line of his back. He pulled a small bottle of lube from the drawer and shut it.

"Of course you keep that within reach, you're a sick fuck, you know that?" Sirius scoffed, fully turning around to address him. "Do you always have to bloody someone up before you get your rocks off?"

Snape levelled him with a withering glare. He walked back over to the table, Sirius struggled to keep his eyes level with Snape's. He set the bottle down on the table and his face returned to that emotionless slate. All that lingered was the lust in his blown pupils.

Suddenly, he reached down and grabbed Sirius' dick tightly, *too* tightly. Sirius gasped and he

tensed up. The scowl returned to Snape's face, the malice flooded his eyes, and he realised this was a threat.

"You can call me all the names you want, but I'm still going to fuck you," Snape said, his voice was low as he leaned into Sirius. He let go of his dick and rested his hand against the table, effectively anchoring Sirius to the spot. He pressed against Sirius as he returned to the bite mark he made on Sirius' neck and added another. Snape's erection rubbed against Sirius', hard and wanting. That hand returned to his hair and pulled his head back again, exposing more of his skin.

"You have a thing for hair, don't you?" Sirius asked, desperate to distract himself from how *good* Snape felt against him.

"Turn around," Snape ordered, ignoring Sirius. He didn't give Sirius a chance to do it himself, he maneuvered him with one hand in his hair and one on his hip.

Snape pushed Sirius down against the table, keeping one hand on the back of his neck. The edge dug into his hips and his erection was effectively trapped between his stomach and the surface of the smooth table. This was going to be torture.

Moments later he felt the cool press of lube-coated fingers against his ass before they pushed inside. It had been a while since Sirius had felt that sensation, and it had never been quite this rough before. Snape didn't curl his fingers, he only focused on stretching Sirius - only thinking about his own cock.

Sirius tensed up as Snape added another finger, but he pushed through it without slowing down. Sirius was hit with a fresh wave of loathing towards the man.

Snape withdrew his fingers and Sirius felt him press the blunt head of his cock against his ass. He pushed forward, Sirius groaned as he felt Snape slowly fill him up. Snape paused here, and Sirius almost asked him why, until he wrapped his hands around Sirius' upper arms and pulled him back onto his cock.

The movement slid Sirius down the table, made him arch his back to accommodate for the angle, and elicited a moan. Snape controlled their movements without moving his hips, Sirius was rocked back and forth against the table, feeling Snape's cock thrust further into him with every stroke. Snape's grip on his arms tightened, he felt his fingers press into his biceps, it was sure to leave bruises. What was a few dozen more?

Snape's pace increased, the drag of Sirius' dick between himself and the table sent pleasure curling through his abdomen. It felt heavy where it rested, and he was unsure if he was even going to have to touch himself to come.

Behind him, he could hear Snape's breaths coming in short and ragged. His hands finally left Sirius' arms and made their way to his hips. He quickly picked up the pace, meeting Sirius halfway as he slammed into him. The sound was obscene, skin on skin as Severus' gasps and Sirius' moans echoed throughout the room.

Sirius almost screamed as Snape slammed into his prostate. He pulled back and slammed into that spot again, again, and again. Sirius let his head drop back down against the table, moaned into the wood to prevent the sound from leaking into the neighbouring rooms.

Desperate to not lose the rolling waves of pleasure and the pressure building in the base of his abdomen, he moaned out, "Fuck, right there!"

In spite, Snape slowed down and changed his angle. The pleasure dissipated and Sirius groaned and shoved his hips backwards in an effort to regain that heavenly feeling.

“Seriously? You- you bastard,” Sirius bit out.

Snape snapped his hips forward, stealing the rest of Sirius’ words from his mouth. The angle changed back, but the pace remained agonisingly slow. Each thrust was punctuated and *hard*, Sirius rocked back and forth with the force.

The slow pace didn’t last much longer. As much as Snape tried to hold out just to upset Sirius, he let out a small groan of, “fuck,” and slowly began to speed up again. He kept each thrust hard and Sirius swore his vision was about to go when he finally came. He tensed up as his cock jumped and spilled underneath him. He couldn’t keep his head up as he shook, and he collapsed back down onto the table.

Just as Sirius was coming out of it, Snape stuttered inside him before he pulled out and came over his back. The other’s hot cum striped up his spine, the feeling was downright lewd and ignited that anger in Sirius again.

“Are you fucking serious?” Sirius snapped. He stood up and turned around, not caring that Snape’s cum was dripping onto his table - he should have thought about that before he pulled that little stunt.

Snape had a cruel smile on his face, one of intent. His cheeks were flushed and sweat beaded along his forehead. He looked like a mess, but Sirius was certain he looked worse off.

“Why don’t you use my shower? It’ll do you some good,” Snape suggested in that condescending tone Sirius was so used to. He gestured to the door in the corner of the room.

Sirius shoved the man back and breezed past him. He made a beeline for the bathroom and locked himself inside. He stood with his back against the door - something else you’ll have to clean up, you cunt - and caught his breath. He stepped into the shower and turned the taps on. The water flooded over him and he stood still for another moment.

He remembered his ragged clothes outside. He would have to steal one of Snape’s shirts before he left, he was sure the asshole could spare it.

Thank God Sirius could use the rain as an excuse to wear a scarf. The bruises on his face were a little harder to explain away.

Remus had taken one look at his face when they met up the next morning at the Women’s GB v Indonesia hockey match and blanched.

“Christ, did that prick actually punch you?” Remus asked, surveying his body language to see if he was covering any other injuries. Sirius gave nothing away, but he couldn’t keep the smirk from his face.

His phone buzzed in his pocket. He pulled it out and looked at the text he received. It was from a number he didn’t have saved in his phone, and it wasn’t a British number. Sirius read the text, and the mystery solved itself:

‘See you at the World Championships - Severus Snape’

End Notes

Thanks for reading! If you liked it, please leave a kudos or a comment <3

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!